

CLAIM SET AS AMENDED:

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1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for handling stacked units of boards, ~~said apparatus~~ comprising a stacker carrier capable of moving a plurality of stacked units placed on a support bed in a storage area into storage stacks and off from said storage stacks, respectively, having lift units adapted to the opposite sides of said stacker carrier, each of said lift units being having a load support member which is rotatably mounted on pivot shafts and individually movable and arranged to cooperate so as to elevate/lower the stacked units of boards resting on said support bed,

wherein the apparatus further comprises actuators mounted on each of the lift units for enabling the load support members of the lift units to rotate about the pivot shafts between a transfer position and a home position.

2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~each of the plurality of lift units includes load support members and, respectively,~~ the support bed includes mating members for locking the support bed to the lift units at least for the duration of a lifting operation.

3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said load support members and said mating members are provided with interlocking mating shapes.

4. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each of said support members is provided with a protruding part forming an angle with the horizontal plane during the lifting operation.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each of said lift units is actuated by two drive shafts driving a plurality of lift elements, said plurality of lift elements being a plurality of lift chains, and wherein said drive shafts are arranged to be driven by at least one drive unit equipped with a variable-frequency inverter and an angular pulse encoder or a similar position transducer.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said lift units are equipped with at least one drive unit, and when the number of drive units is larger than one, the first one of said drive units is a so-called master drive unit, and the others are so-called slave drive units.

7. (Previously Presented) A support bed according to claim 1, wherein at least two opposite edges of the support bed are provided with mating members capable of locking said support members of said lift units to said support bed.

8. (Previously Presented) A support bed according to claim 1, wherein said mating members of said support bed are formed by bracket edges slanted downward by an angle from the horizontal plane.

9. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said load support members and said mating members are provided with interlocking mating shapes.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said support ~~member~~ members is provided with a protruding part forming an angle with the horizontal plane during the lifting operation.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said each of support ~~member~~ members is provided with a protruding part forming an angle with the horizontal plane during the lifting operation.

12. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said lift units is actuated by two drive shafts driving a plurality of lift elements, and said drive shafts are arranged to be driven by a drive unit equipped with a variable-frequency inverter and an angular pulse encoder or a similar position transducer.

13. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein each of said lift units is actuated by two drive shafts driving a plurality of lift elements, and said drive shafts are arranged to be driven by a drive unit equipped with a variable-frequency inverter and an angular pulse encoder or a similar position transducer.

14. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 4, wherein each of said lift units is actuated by two drive shafts driving a plurality of lift elements, and said drive shafts are arranged to be driven by a drive unit equipped with a variable-frequency inverter and an angular pulse encoder or a similar position transducer.

15. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said lift units are equipped with at least one drive unit, and when the number of said drive units is larger than one, the first one of said drive units is a so-called master drive unit and the others are so-called slave drive units.

16. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said lift units are equipped with at least one drive unit, and when the number of said drive units is larger than one, the first one of said drive units is a so-called master drive unit and the others are so-called slave drive units.

17. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said lift units are equipped with at least one drive unit, and when the number of said drive units is larger than one, the first one of said drive units is a so-called master drive unit and the others are so-called slave drive units.

18. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein when the number of said drive units is larger than one, the first one of said drive units is a so-called master drive unit and the others are so-called slave drive units.

19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim ~~1~~ 12, wherein said plurality of lift elements is a plurality of lift chains.

20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the lift units further ~~comprises~~ comprise roller members adapted to run on columnar legs.
